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Afghan Women On The Move and SisterWorks partner to empower refugee and migrant women in Western Sydney

Afghan Women on the Move (AWOTM) and SisterWorks today announced a partnership to help refugee and migrant women living in Western Sydney find employment.

As part of the partnership, the organisations will establish a community hub in Blacktown LGA, providing access to culturally-safe programs designed to build skills, confidence, independence, social cohesion and economic outlook.

Western Sydney is one of the most culturally diverse areas in NSW, with almost 50 per cent of the population born overseas.

Run by and for women, AWOTM and SisterWorks, deliver programs throughout NSW and Victoria to help women from refugee and migrant backgrounds overcome barriers so they can fully participate in Australian workplaces and society.

Founder and CEO of AWOTM, Maryam Zahind believes the new partnership will provide essential and impactful support for local women from a Cultural and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) background, particularly new arrived Afghan women in the community.

"I am excited to kickstart our ambition to give Afghan women the opportunity to better the lives of themselves and their families," she says.

"Our partnership with SisterWorks is an example of women working for women."

Sisterworks CEO Ifrin Fittock says refugee and migrant women face numerous challenges when they arrive in Australia including low English proficiency, a lack of confidence and discrepancy in locally recognised experience or qualifications.

"We believe that work empowers women," she says.

"At SisterWorks, our pre-employment and education programs equip women with knowledge and skills so they can adjust to their new life in Australia, build their confidence, foster connections, engage with the community, enter the workplace and gain economic independence."

SisterWorks already runs Empowerment Hubs in Melbourne, Bendigo and Dandenong; this partnership is their first in NSW.

Blacktown City Mayor Tony Bleasdale OAM applauded the announcement acknowledging the positive impact the initiative will have on the local community's economy and cohesion.

"An Empowerment Hub of this kind will help create more skilled labour for local jobs in Blacktown and will contribute to our region's economic growth and promote multiculturalism," he says.

“Blacktown City residents represent more than 180 countries and languages. The incredible work done by Afghan Women on the Move and SisterWorks is a testament to the resilience and strength of their communities.”

The partnership allows both organisations to expand reach to CALD women that seek social and economic support across Australia. Over the past three years, AWOTM has over 6000 followers and offers a voice and a platform for Afghan and multicultural women in Australia to reach their dreams and aspirations. Since 2013, SisterWorks has supported over 1200 women from migrant, refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds.

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